

BRECON RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT

of the

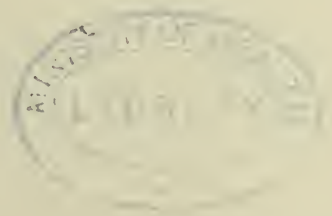
MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

for the year 1954

Officials. Medical Officer of Health...T.C.R.George, M.R.C.S.,
L.C.R.P.,
D.P.H.

Chief Sanitary Inspector....W.J.Rees,
Sanitary Inspector's
Certificate of the Royal Sanitary Institute and
Sanitary Inspector's Examination Joint Board;
Meat and other Foods Certificate of the Royal
Sanitary Institute; Diploma of the Royal Institute
of Public Health and Hygeine.

Additional Sanitary Inspector..R.Taylor, M.S.I.A.,
M.R.I.P.H.H.



Report of the Medical Officer of Health.1954

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I beg to submit my annual report on the sanitary conditions and the state of the public health in the Brecon Rural District for the year 1954.

The arrangement of the report is in accordance with the directions contained in Circular 28/54(Wales), issued by the Welsh Board of Health.

SECTION 1. GENERAL AND VITAL STATISTICS.Statistical Summary for the year 1954.

Area.....189,532 acres.
 Population (Census 1951).....7430.
 Population (Estimated at Midsummer, 1954).....7480.
 Number of inhabited houses.....2273.

<u>Live Births.</u>	<u>Males.</u>	<u>Females.</u>	<u>Total.</u>	<u>Rate per 1000 pop.</u>
Legitimate	57	42	99	
Illegitimate	<u>3</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>5</u>	
	60	44	104	13.9
<u>Still Births.</u>	3	0	3	28.0
<u>Deaths from all causes</u>	51	32	83	11.0

Maternal Deaths.....Nil.

Deaths under one year;

All infants.....1. Rate per 1000 live births.....9.6
 Legitimate infants.....1.

Deaths from special causes;

Infectious disease.....Nil.
 Tuberculosis of respiratory system.....Nil.
 Other tubercular disease.....Nil.
 Cancer.....Eleven.

Area. The Rural District of Brecon, which has an area of 189,532 acres, is a large district in the County of Breconshire. The district is situated mainly in the northern part of the County and consists of rather more than one-third of the total size of the whole County.

The district is agricultural in nature and farming is the predominant occupation of the inhabitants.

There are no large towns in the area and the administrative offices are situated in the Borough of Brecon.

Population. Census, 1931.....8302.
 Census, 1951.....7430.

<u>1944.</u>	<u>1945.</u>	<u>1946.</u>	<u>1947.</u>	<u>1948.</u>	<u>1949.</u>	<u>1950.</u>	<u>1951.</u>	<u>1952.</u>	<u>1953.</u>	<u>1954</u>
6980.	7057.	7074.	7065.	7113.	7042.	7178.	7338.	7432.	7464.	7480

The above figures are the Registrar General's estimated figures for the various years.

The number of inhabited houses in the district was 2273 giving an average number of 3.2 persons per house. The above population figure includes members of the armed forces stationed in the area.

<u>Births.</u>	<u>Males.</u>	<u>Females.</u>	<u>Total.</u>	<u>Rate.</u>
1940.....	62.....	63.....	125.....	16.8.
1941.....	51.....	50.....	101.....	12.2.
1942.....	71.....	54.....	125.....	16.3.
1943.....	52.....	57.....	109.....	14.9.
1944.....	82.....	60.....	142.....	20.3.
1945.....	53.....	52.....	105.....	14.8.
1946.....	71.....	60.....	131.....	18.4.
1947.....	58.....	68.....	126.....	17.8.
1948.....	74.....	62.....	136.....	19.1.
1949.....	55.....	54.....	109.....	15.5.
1950.....	57.....	59.....	116.....	16.1.
1951.....	45.....	52.....	97.....	13.2.
1952.....	53.....	54.....	107.....	14.3.
1953.....	75.....	54.....	129.....	17.2.
1954.....	60.....	44.....	104.....	13.9.
England and Wales, 1954.....				15.2.

It will be observed that the birthrate for the year under review was lower than the average for the whole of England and Wales and higher than the deathrate for the district.

Deaths. After taking into account the outwardly and inwardly transferable deaths the net number of deaths registered amongst residents in the district is shown in the following table:-

	<u>Males.</u>	<u>Females.</u>	<u>Total.</u>	<u>Rate.</u>
1940.....	55.....	51.....	106.....	13.6.
1941.....	45.....	58.....	103.....	12.5.
1942.....	49.....	52.....	101.....	13.2.
1943.....	40.....	49.....	89.....	12.2.
1944.....	36.....	56.....	92.....	13.2.
1945.....	51.....	55.....	106.....	15.0.
1946.....	43.....	42.....	85.....	12.0.
1947.....	41.....	39.....	80.....	11.3.
1948.....	45.....	38.....	83.....	11.6.
1949.....	38.....	31.....	69.....	9.8.
1950.....	40.....	51.....	91.....	12.9.
1951.....	41.....	39.....	80.....	10.9.
1952.....	48.....	37.....	85.....	11.4.
1953.....	50.....	29.....	79.....	10.6.
1954.....	51.....	32.....	83.....	11.0.
England and Wales, 1954.....				11.3.

The deathrate for 1954 was therefore lower than the average for the whole of England and Wales, and also lower than the birthrate for the district.

<u>Still Births.</u>	<u>Males.</u>	<u>Females.</u>	<u>Total.</u>	<u>Rate.</u>
1940.....	4.....	1.....	5.....	0.6.
1941.....	3.....	3.....	6.....	0.7.
1942.....	6.....	3.....	9.....	1.1.
1943.....	1.....	5.....	6.....	0.8.
1944.....	0.....	2.....	2.....	0.3.
1945.....	0.....	1.....	1.....	0.1.
1946.....	1.....	4.....	5.....	0.71.
1947.....	4.....	3.....	7.....	0.90.
1948.....	4.....	4.....	8.....	1.1.
1949.....	3.....	1.....	4.....	0.57.
1950.....	2.....	1.....	3.....	0.41.

Brecon Rural District

<u>Still Births.</u>	<u>Males.</u>	<u>Females.</u>	<u>Total.</u>	<u>Rate.</u>
1951.....	2.....	3.....	5.....	0.68.
1952.....	3.....	1.....	4.....	0.53.
1953.....	1.....	2.....	3.....	0.40.
1954.....	3.....	0.....	3.....	28.0.
England and Wales, 1954.....				24.0.

The stillbirth rate was higher than the average for the whole of England and Wales. The rate is per 1000 live and still births.

Infantile Mortality. This is the number of deaths occurring in children of under one year of age. The rate is calculated per 1000 live births.

	<u>Males.</u>	<u>Females.</u>	<u>Total.</u>	<u>Rate.</u>
1940.....	6.....	5.....	11.....	88.
1941.....	6.....	3.....	9.....	89.
1942.....	3.....	3.....	6.....	48.
1943.....	0.....	1.....	1.....	9.
1944.....	2.....	4.....	6.....	42.
1945.....	3.....	4.....	7.....	66.
1946.....	1.....	1.....	2.....	15.
1947.....	3.....	4.....	7.....	55.
1948.....	4.....	1.....	5.....	36.
1949.....	2.....	0.....	2.....	18.
1950.....	1.....	1.....	2.....	17.1.
1951.....	1.....	1.....	2.....	20.5.
1952.....	1.....	0.....	1.....	9.3.
1953.....	2.....	0.....	2.....	15.5.
1954.....	1.....	0.....	1.....	9.6.
England and Wales, 1954.....				25.5.

The infantile mortality rate was lower than the average for the whole of England and Wales. This death occurred in a child of under 4 weeks old.

<u>Analysis of Causes of Deaths.</u>	<u>Males....51.</u>	<u>Females...32.</u>
	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females.</u>
Malignant neoplasms, stomach.....	5.....	0.....
Malignant neoplasms, lung.....	1.....	0.....
Other malignant neoplasms.....	3.....	2.....
Vascular lesions of nervous system.....	7.....	4.....
Coronary disease.....	6.....	5.....
Hypertension with heart disease.....	1.....	0.....
Other heart disease.....	12.....	13.....
Other circulatory diseases.....	1.....	0.....
Influenza.....	0.....	1.....
Pneumonia.....	2.....	2.....
Bronchitis.....	4.....	0.....
Ulcer stomach.....	0.....	1.....
Nephritis.....	0.....	1.....
Other causes.....	8.....	2.....
Accidents, non motor vehicle.....	1.....	0.....
Suicide.....	0.....	1.....

The deaths are classified under the headings given in the new Abridged list of Causes of Deaths.

Illegitimacy. The number of illegitimate births registered as belonging to residents in the district was five.

Maternal Mortality. There was no death during the year which could be attributed to childbirth.

SECTION 2. GENERAL PROVISIONS OF HEALTH SERVICES.

Public Health Officers. There were no changes in your Public Health Officers during the year. Mr. W. J. Rees remained as your Chief Sanitary Inspector and Mr. R. Taylor as your Additional Sanitary Inspector.

Laboratory Facilities. During the year laboratory facilities were available at Cardiff, Newport, Carmarthen, Swansea, Aberystwyth and Brecon. Water samples were sent to the Public Analyst at Carmarthen and to the Public Health Laboratory at Cardiff, whilst any investigation required in the control of infectious disease was performed by the Public Health Laboratory at Cardiff. All the milk sampling including milk examined for the presence of tuberculosis was done by the Public Health Laboratory at Cardiff.

Ambulance Facilities. As a result of the National Health Service Act, 1946, the County Council are responsible for the provision of an ambulance service and made use of the existing St. John's ambulance for general use while ambulances from Merthyr Isolation Hospital conveyed patients suffering from infectious disease to hospital.

Home Nursing. Under the new Health Act, the County Council are responsible for the provision of home nursing facilities. The nurses previously partly employed by various district nursing associations are whole time employees of the County Council.

Treatment Centres and Clinics. Maternity and Child Welfare Clinics administered by the County Council are held regularly in Brecon and Sennybridge. Ante-natal clinics and facilities for the treatment of minor ailments, immunisation, dental and eye defects and orthopaedic defects are available at the County Health Offices, Brecon. These are administered by the County Council.

Hospitals. The hospital needs of the residents of the district, for all diseases apart from infectious disease, are provided by the Brecon War Memorial Hospital. A certain number of patients are also treated in the large hospitals situated in Cardiff and Swansea.

The arrangements for the treatment of infectious disease remain the same as in previous years. Merthyr Borough Council treat the patients from the district suffering from infectious disease and these are conveyed to Merthyr in ambulances maintained by Merthyr Borough Council. These arrangements are proving extremely satisfactory.

For the treatment of cases of smallpox arrangements have been made by the Welsh Board of Health for beds to be available at the Penrhys Hospital, Rhondda.

Disinfection. In the main the methods used for any disinfection required have been fumigation and spraying.

SECTION 3. MATERNITY AND CHILD WELFARE.

These services are administered by the County Council and include clinics for maternity and child welfare, immunisation, dental treatment, orthopaedic treatment, visual defects and expectant mothers. Provision is also made for free and cheap rate milk and medicinal foods. The supervision of midwives, child life protection and the care of premature and illegitimate infants is the responsibility of the County Council.

SECTION 4 SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES.

Water Supplies. Water is derived for domestic and other purposes in the district from 34 Council supplies, private supplies, wells and springs.

Generally speaking, it is safe to say that the supply of water is poor, none of the supplies being chlorinated and only one filtered.

Water Supplies. During the year 45 inspections of public and private supplies were carried out. The water from public supplies was sampled chemically on four occasions giving 4 satisfactory results.

28 samples of private supplies were taken and, of these 11 were found to be satisfactory and 17 unsatisfactory. The majority of these samples were taken at the request of the Breconshire Agricultural Executive Committee in support of grant aided schemes for the provision of water to individual premises.

In all cases the Committee and the owners of the supplies were advised of the results of the analyses.

Good progress was maintained by the contractors with the work of pipe laying in connection with the Council's Regional water scheme. During the year 43 miles approximately of pipes of various diameters were laid.

Some little progress was made with the construction of the pumping station at Newton, the treatment works at Penwington and the 8 small service reservoirs.

Water Supplies Improved, Augmented etc. An extension was carried out on the Talybont estate to provide for the supply of water to 13 houses under construction. Apart from this only routine maintenance was done.

Of the Council's 34 supplies only 11 can be considered adequate for the immediate needs of the inhabitants for domestic purposes, and those of Sennybridge and Devynock, Llanfrynach, Trecastle, Llangorse, Cray, Talybont and Llanddew are adequate for a proper drainage scheme.

It will be seen from the above that adequate and wholesome supplies of water are very badly needed and the major scheme should be a great boon to the district.

Drainage and Sewerage. During the year a modern scheme of sewerage and sewage disposal was commenced in the village of Pencelly.

Properties connected to main drainage.

The response of owners to connecting up drainage arrangements to the Council's new sewers has been quite satisfactory. During the year, the following number of properties were provided with main drainage:-

Llangorse.....	19.
Trecastle.....	4.
Talybont.....	15.
Llanfrynach.....	3.
Cray.....	7.
Llanddew.....	6.

These additional figures brought the total at the end of the year to:-

Llangorse.....	60.
Trecastle.....	46.
Talybont.....	76.
Llanfrynach.....	46.
Cray.....	10.
Llanddew.....	24.
Total	<u>262.</u>

Number of visits by Sanitary Inspector.....134.
Number of visits by Sanitary Inspector to sewerage works....73.

Public Cleansing. The collection and disposal of household refuse has been carried out during the year by contract labour under the supervision of the Chief Sanitary Inspector. A comprehensive scheme for the removal of refuse is now therefore in operation throughout the district.

The Council is at present maintaining 3 refuse tips. These are, however, filling rapidly and the securing of new tipping sites is likely to become very urgent.

Sanitary Inspection of the Area. The sanitary inspection of the area was undertaken by the Chief Sanitary Inspector, Mr. W. J. Rees, and the additional Sanitary Inspector Mr. Taylor.

The following summary gives information relating to the work of the sanitary inspectors during the year.

Nuisances.

Number of complaints received.....	135.
Number of complaints investigated.....	135.
Number of premises inspected.....	135.
Number of premises revisited.....	25.
Number of preliminary notices served.....	15.
for (a) Structural defects.....	13.
(b) Sanitary defects.....	2.
Number of statutory notices served.....	1.

The supply of building material during the year was somewhat improved and therefore it was easier to get necessary repairs carried out and so prevent decent property deteriorating.

Houses let in Lodgings. It is not considered that any of the houses in the district are of such a nature to require control under byelaws made under section 6 of the Housing Act, 1936.

Offensive Trades. There are no offensive trades in the district.

Common Lodging Houses. There are no common lodging houses in the district.

Licensed Premises.

Number of visits made by Sanitary Inspector.....	77.
Number of defects found.....	0.

Shops.

Number of inspections made.....	47.
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Factories. A complete survey of the factories in the district was carried out with the following results:-

Total number of factories.....	19.
Total number of inspections made.....	66.
Total number of defects found (want of cleanliness).....	0.

Tents, Vans and Sheds.

Number of visits made.....	72.
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Eradication of bed bugs and steps taken to combat infestation.

Any premises found as a result of inspection or complaint to be infested with bed bugs or other vermin is treated with D.D.T. preparations which have been found very successful. No premises were found infested during the year.

Rodent Control. Mr. J. C. Reynolds is still employed as the Rodent Officer to carry out the work of rodent control under the supervision of the Chief Sanitary Inspector.

Details of the work carried out are given below:-

Number of premises inspected.....175.
 Number of premises found infested.....56.
 Number of agricultural premises found infested.....9.
 Number of premises treated by Rodent Officer.....56.
 Number of premises treated by occupier.....0.
 Number of premises treated by B.A.E.C.....9.

Sewers were treated during the year in the neighbourhood of infested houses.

SECTION 5. HOUSING.

The following details show the housing position as it was at the end of the year.

Number of houses built by Council during the year.....38.
 Number of houses built by private enterprise during the year..7.
 Number of Inspections under Housing Act.....113.

Improvement Grants, Housing Act, 1949. Ten applications were made and all ten were approved during the year.

Rural Housing Survey. This was continued during the year. The following figures show the position at the end of the year.

Work during the year :-

Number inspected

Category

1. 2. 3. 4. 5

186

21. 12. 34. 63. 56.

Previously inspected

1661

273 281. 359. 393. 355.

Totals	1847	294	293	393	456	411
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Housing Consolidated Regulations 1925 & 1932.

The district is being inspected as has already been referred to under the paragraph dealing with the Housing Survey.

As and when the occasion necessitates representation is made to the Council with a view to -

- (a) Serving of notices requiring the execution of works or
- (b) The making of demolition or closing orders.

Demolition orders made - 8

Undertakings accepted - 11

SECTION 6. INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD.

The number of food premises in the area was as follows:-

Retailers.....16.
 Icecream retailers.....13.
 Bakers.....2.
 Cafes.....4.
 Hotels where meals are served 12.

On the whole it can be said that the general standard of cleanliness observed was satisfactory. On no occasion has it been necessary to serve a notice on any person engaged in the food trade.

There was no educational activity in connection with food in the district during the year but in the normal course of their duties the Sanitary Inspectors, in their discussions with persons engaged in the food trade, emphasised the importance of the need for the highest standard of hygienic principle in the preparation and sale of foodstuffs to the public.

MEAT INSPECTION.

Number of Registered Slaughterhouses in Area - 1
 Number of Inspections made to Slaughterhouse - 38
 Number of various animals inspected

<u>Beasts</u>	<u>Cows</u>	<u>Sheep</u>	<u>Calves</u>	<u>Pigs</u>
19	7	182	9	44

Meat affected with Diseases -

	Diseases	Livers		Lungs		Heads		Total Car	
		Whole or Part	lbs	Whole or Part	lbs	No.	lbs	cases & all Organs	lbs.
Bovine	Distomatosis	12	108½					12	108½
	Echinococcus)								
	Veterinorum)			1	9¼			1	9¼
	Cirrrosis	4	19½					4	19½
	Cavernous)								
	Angioma)	3	47¼					3	47¼
	Tuberculosis			1	12			1	12
<u>Sheep</u>	Distomatosis	3	4½					3	4½
	Cirrrosis	2	6¼					2	6¼
	Strongylus)								
	Rufescens)			7	12½			7	12½
	Pleurisy			2	6			2	6
<u>Pigs</u>	Tuberculosis					2	9¾	2	9¾
	Echinococcus)								
	Veterinorum)	1	1					1	1
Totals		25	187	11	39¾	2	9¾	38	236½

Disposal of Condemned Food. All condemned foodstuffs are disposed of by burying in one of the Council's refuse disposal sites.

Milk. Considerable changes in the legislature governing the production of milk occurred by the coming into operation on October 1st, 1949 of the Food and Drugs (Milk and Dairies) Act, 1944. Briefly under this Act the supervision of milk production on farms now passes to the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries and Local Authorities are left with the control of distributors.

Number of samples taken during the year.....52.
 Number of samples satisfactory.....48.
 Number of samples unsatisfactory.....4.

The result of all these samples were sent to the Milk Sub-Committee of the Ministry at Brecon.

Thirty four samples of milk were submitted during the year for the presence of tuberculosis and all proved negative.

Food Condemned. The following foodstuffs excluding meat were found to be unfit for human consumption and were destroyed by burying.....109 lbs.

All condemned meat from slaughterhouse is collected by fertiliser making firm from Newport.

Food Preparation Rooms (including bakehouses).

Number of inspections made.....33.

Ice Cream Premises.

Number of inspections made.....32

Number of samples taken...20. Of these 20, 18 were returned as satisfactory and 2 as fair.

There are 13 premises registered for the sale of ice cream.

Preserved Food Premises.

Number of inspections made.....30

Fish and Fried Fish Shops.

Number of inspections made.....2.

There was one premises registered for the sale of fried fish.

SECTION 7. PREVALENCE AND CONTROL OF INFECTIOUS DISEASE.

The following number of cases of notifiable infectious disease were reported to me during the year:-

Ophthalmia neonatorum.....1 case.
Whooping Cough.....4 cases.
Scarlet Fever.....8 cases
Malaria.....1 case.

As will be seen, the district was very little troubled by infectious disease during the year.

The cases were, on the whole, mild and no cases were removed to hospital. No deaths occurred as a result of notifiable infectious disease.

At the end of the year, four persons who had been notified as suffering from paratyphoid fever in the previous year, were still excreting the organisms and were therefore, at that time, carriers. In addition one further carrier was found.

Venereal Disease. The County Council has an agreement with the General and Eye Hospital, Swansea, for the treatment of these cases. The tracing of contacts and the following up of defaulters is the responsibility of the County Council.

Tuberculosis. The following details show the position as regards tuberculosis in recent years.

Number of cases in the register at commencement of year.....36.
Number of fresh cases notified during the year.....5.
Number of cases removed from register
 (a) Deaths.....0.
 (b) Left district.....3.
 (c) Disease arrested.....2.
Number of cases remaining on register at end of year.....36.

The number of cases notified in recent years is shown below:-

1944.	1945.	1946.	1947.	1948.	1949.	1950.	1951.	1952.	1953.	1954.
7.	4.	9.	5.	8.	7.	11.	13.	4.	3.	5.

Diphtheria Immunisation. As a result of the new Health Act, the County Council are responsible for the immunisation of children against diphtheria and details for the district will be found in the annual report of the County Medical Officer.

There were no cases of diphtheria in the district during the year.

It is pleasing to see that the incidence of diphtheria continues to fall. The object of the immunisation campaign, however, remains the same; to secure the immunisation of not less than 75% of babies before their first birthday. During the first half of 1954, however, it is disturbing to note that only 30.2% of the estimated number of children reaching the age of one year during this period received this protection. It must be remembered that diphtheria still kills and that elimination of the disease is conditional upon the maintenance of an adequate level of immunisation. If parents leave their children unprotected there may be a return of diphtheria outbreaks, and there have been several sharp reminders of this possibility during the year under review.

In the preparation of this report I have endeavoured to deal briefly with all matters within my responsibility regarding public health and preventive medicine and I have included all the subjects specifically requested by the Welsh Board of Health.

Yours faithfully,

T. C. R. George,

Medical Officer of Health.